



City of Lowell - Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 3, 2022 6:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, City Hall

City of Lowell, 375 Merrimack Street, Lowell, MA

Remote Participation Optional via Zoom

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit www.ltc.org

Members Present

Chairman Linnehan

Vice Chairman Frechette

Member Lockhart

Member Malavich

Member Cheng

Members Absent

Member Gallivan

Others Present

Francesca Cigliano, Interim Director of Development Services

A quorum of the Board was present. Chairman Linnehan called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

I. Minutes for Approval

9/8 Meeting Minutes

G. Frechette motioned and C. Cheng seconded the motion to continue the petition to the October 17 meeting. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

9/19/2022 Meeting Minutes

G. Frechette noted that "Member Linnehan and Member Frechette" should be changed to "Chairman Linnehan and Vice Chairman Frechette". G. Frechette motioned to approve the minutes with those changes incorporated, seconded by C. Cheng, approved unanimously, (5-0).

II. New Business

Definitive Subdivision – 42 B Street 01851

Tyler Provost has applied to the Lowell Planning Board to subdivide the existing lot and construct a two-family home on the newly created lot. The property is located in the Traditional Two Family (TTF) zoning district. The newly created lots will not meet the minimum frontage requirement pursuant to Section 5.1 of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance. The project requires Definitive Subdivision approval from the Lowell Planning Board under Lowell's Subdivision of Land Regulations.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

None

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned and R. Lockhart seconded the motion to place the application on file until the applicant would like to come back before the board. At that time, the applicant will need to re-notice the application (legal ad and abutter notices and updated sign). The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

III. Continued Business

Definitive Subdivision – 90 Lupine Road 01850

Cornerstone Land Associates has applied to the Lowell Planning Board for the approval of a definitive subdivision plan that includes the subdivision of the existing parcel into two (2) parcels, one of which does not meet the minimum frontage requirements pursuant to Section 5.1 of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance. The property is located within the Traditional Neighborhood Single Family (TSF) zoning district. This project requires Planning Board approval under Lowell's Subdivision of Land Regulations.

Speaking on Behalf:

Ken Lania, the Applicant

K. Lania explained how the application is consistent with other structures and lots in the neighborhood.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

G. Frechette noted that the application package is now complete. This is what the Board would like to see with Definitive Subdivision applications moving forward. Make a case. Show the Planning Board why relief may be granted, why it is consistent with the neighborhood. Very satisfied with additional materials.

R. Lockhart said he had no questions.

C. Cheng said that the applicant did a thorough analysis.

T. Linnehan noted that the other houses on the streets are basically the same as what is being proposed. Additional history and drawings to back it up is helpful and shows how it meets the granting criteria. He is in favor.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned to approve with the following condition:

- (1) The home shall be built as per the submitted plan dated July 31, 2019.

The motion was seconded by R. Lockhart and passed unanimously, (5-0).

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned and R. Lockhart seconded the motion to continue the item to the November 7 Planning Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

Site Plan Review and Special Permit – 35 Varum Avenue 01854

House of Hope, Inc. has applied to the Planning Board seeking Site Plan Review and Special Permits to construct an eight (8) unit apartment building at 35 Varum Ave. The property is located in the Traditional Neighborhood Single Family (TSF) zoning district and requires Planning Board approval for Site Plan Review under Section 11.4, a Special Permit to extend the existing non-conforming use under Section 4.5.2, and a Special Permit for the Maximum Driveway Length under Section 6.7.2.

On Behalf:

Deb Chasse, House of Hope

Jacob Taylor, Klein Hornig

Lauren Cella-Mowatt, Davis Sq. Architects

Micaela Goodrich, Davis Sq Architects

Speaking in Favor:

T. Linnehan read two letters of support into the record, submitted by “Building Communities Changing Lives” and “Coalition for a Better Acre”

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan asked how long the driveway was. The team confirmed 337 ft.

G. Frechette asked for clarification regarding height. He has an issue with unreasonable departure of character from the neighborhood which is a granting criteria of Site Plan Review. G. Frechette noted that the application is seeking several variances. If they were building a second SF home, it would be more in keeping with the neighborhood. They need input from the fire department. Does not know how he can get past the criteria stating “minimizing unreasonable departure...”

R. Lockhart said that the traffic engineer provided comment.

T. Linnehan noted that staff has not heard from the fire department regarding the project. T. Linnehan noted that they need a special permit for the driveway since it will be longer than 200ft.

C. Cheng asked about the buffer from neighbors. Jacob said that they would meet to find an acceptable solution. C. Cheng concurred with the other Board members that this use would differ from others in the single family zone.

R. Malavich said his concerns were the length of the driveway for LFD access. Expanding a facility in a single family zone doesn't seem to make sense. Could allow other properties to want the same treatment.

T. Linnehan noted that LFD has not approved the project and would not feel comfortable moving forward without their approval.

J. Taylor requested a continuance.

C. Cheng asked staff to confirm how we define # of stories.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned and R. Lockhart seconded the motion to continue the item to the November 7 Planning Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

IV. Notices

Housing Choice Legislation Presentation

The Commonwealth has recently updated sections of Chapter 40A. City staff will make a presentation on this topic.

F. Cigliano presented recent changes to Chapter 40A of MGL that affect the Planning Board that were passed with the goal of increasing housing production.

V. Further Comments from Planning Board Members

R. Lockhart noted that the Historic Board had been quiet in recent months.

VI. Adjournment

R. Malavich motioned to adjourn, seconded by C. Cheng, passed unanimously, (5-0). The time was 8:30PM.